

Species 1, Figures 1 -24, applicant has also elected only claims 1-9 and 25. Claim 25 now has been renumbered 24 by both applicant and the Examiner.

In this regard, claims 10-15 depend, in one chain or another, from claims 4-9. Furthermore, the Examiner has determined that claims 4-9 contain allowable subject matter, if rewritten in independent form to incorporate the limitations of the independent claim and any intermediate claims. Therefore, applicant believes that further dependent claims 10-15 should not have been withdrawn from consideration as there exists a [*de facto*] generic claim from which dependent claims 10-15 depend.

Applicant has amended claim 4 into independent form and amended both claims 4 and 8 with respect to the antecedent objections raised by the Examiner. With respect to the objection to "snap-in shaft member" claim 8, line 2, antecedent basis previously existed at claim 4, line 5. However, each of claim 4-9 have been further amended to avoid indefinite terminology and antecedent issues.

In the Claims:

Amend the claims 1-34 as follows.

1. (Amended) A load floor latch_ comprising:

a load floor lid;

a pawl member positioned with respect to said load floor lid to extend beyond thereof for having a portion thereof engage a keeper structure for retaining said load floor lid in the closed position; and

a- an actuation assembly having a handle and an associated structure which acts upon an exterior surface of said pawl member which face being proximate said keeper engagement portion of said pawl member;

b. a pawl member;

c. a lid for attachment of said actuation assembly and said pawl member; and

d. ~~a lid cover .~~

2.(Amended) The load floor latch of claim 1, wherein said pawl member exterior face has an exterior ramped surface; and wherein said actuation assembly includes a camming member which operates against said exterior ramped surface to move said pawl member away from said keeper structure position ~~said actuation assembly comprises a hoop actuation element comprising a hoop handle integral with a pair of L-shaped arms extending therefrom, wherein said L-shaped arms have a proximal end and a distal end, wherein said hoop handle is integral with said proximal end of said L-shaped arms, wherein said distal ends have integral detent features.~~

3.(Amended) The load floor latch of claim 2 1, wherein said pawl member includes a body portion and a living spring integral with said body portion and extend in line therefrom ~~said L-shaped arms have stops attached to said distal end.~~

4. (Amended) A load floor latch comprising:

an actuation assembly;

a pawl member;

a lid having connected therewith said actuation assembly and said pawl member;

and

a lid cover enclosing said lid and said pawl member;

wherein said actuation assembly includes a hoop-shaped handle, a pair of L-shaped arms extending therefrom, and detent features located at the distal ends of each L-shaped arm;

wherein said L-shaped arms each also have stops attached to the distal end thereof;

~~The load floor latch of claim 3, wherein said actuation assembly means further~~
includes ~~comprises~~ a leg actuation element having two identical shaft sections connected by a center shaft, wherein said identical shaft sections each have a first end having apertures therein for attachment to said detent features ~~on said hoop actuation member~~ at said distal

end of a respective mating one of said L-shaped arms, and each have a second end having snap-in shaft member extending substantially parallel to said center shaft of said actuation element, wherein on one side of each said identical shaft portions include strength ribs is included a strength rib.

5. (Amended) The load floor latch of claim 4, wherein each said identical shaft section have has a camming surfaces- for abutting said stops attached to on said distal end of said repective L-shaped arms-.

6. (Amended) The load floor latch of claim 5, wherein said pawl member comprises:

a body portion having a slam action-type ramped element at one end;

integral at one end with a living spring having one end thereof integral with and extending from the other end of said body portion; and

wherein said living spring terminates with a pawl tail integral with and extending from the of said living spring , wherein a second end of said body portion comprises a slam action ramped element.

7. (Amended) The load floor latch of claim 5- 6, wherein said lid member comprises includes a pair of central walls, said central walls defining a slot area for positioning said pawl member, side wall sections, wherein said and a pair of sidewalls, each said central wall being connected to a respective side wall are connected by a perpendicular sidewall ; wherein said pair of side wall sections define a slot area for positioning of said pawl member.

8. (Amended) The load floor latch of claim 7, wherein said perpendicular sidewalls each have a positioning tabs to align a respective said snap-in shaft members- of one of said identical shaft sections of said leg actuation element, wherein during activation of said latch said leg actuation element contact the lid when said handle hoop hoop-shaped handle is pulled upward , said leg actuation element contacts the lid thereby causing said central center shaft thereof to contact and slide upward along said ramped element of said pawl

member body portion thereby causing said body portion to retract into said lid against the bias of said living spring thereby forcing the pawl member to disengage a frame.

9. (Amended) The load floor latch of claim 8, wherein said lid cover includes a camming structure positioned between said central walls ~~comprises a camming surface~~ for camming of said living spring of ~~said pawl member~~ during activation and slam action closure of said latch.

10. (Reinserted) The load floor latch of claim 8 9, wherein said camming structure is a diagonal camming surface extending from said lid to in between said central walls, the end of said diagonal camming surface holding said pawl tail against said lid ~~said slot of said lid comprises a pawl holder for acceptance of said pawl tail.~~

M 11. (Reinserted) The load floor latch of claim ~~40~~ 9, wherein said camming structure is a cross member pawl tail holder extending between said central walls, said pawl tail being held against said lid by said pawl tail holder ~~lid has a slot therein for accessibility to said pawl tail.~~

12. (Reinserted) The load floor latch of claim 11, wherein said lid ~~cover has~~ includes an aperture for accessibility to ~~the pawl member~~ said pawl tail.

13. (Reinstated) The load floor latch of one of claims 10 to 11, wherein said lid is flat and continuous.

14. (Reinstated) The load floor latch of one of claims 10 to 11 ~~claim 13~~, wherein said lid cover is flat and compliments the shape of the said lid.

15. (Reinstated) The load floor latch of claim ~~40~~ 11, wherein said cross member pawl tail holder is a support bar which traverses said slot area and is attached to each of said central walls pair of side wall sections.

16. (Withdrawn from consideration pending allowance of a generic claim) A load floor latch comprising:

- a. an actuation assembly;
- b. a pawl member;

c. a housing for maintaining said actuation assembly and said pawl member; wherein said housing comprises a pair of side wall sections having an interior and exterior surfaces, wherein said pair of sidewalls connected by a perpendicular sidewall, wherein said pair of side wall sections define a slot area having a back wall for positioning of said pawl member, wherein said exterior surfaces contain a plurality of snap legs, wherein said side walls have a plurality of aperture for attachment of said actuation assembly; and

d. a lid having a plurality of walls designed to compliment the shape of said housing for attachment thereof, wherein said walls have engagement recesses.

17. (Withdrawn from consideration pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim 16, wherein said actuation means comprises a hoop actuation element having a hoop handle attached proximal to a pair of L-shaped arms extending therefrom, wherein said L-shaped arms have integral detent features on the distal ends.

18. (Withdrawn from consideration pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim 17, wherein said actuation means further comprises a leg actuation element having two identical shaft sections connected by a center shaft, wherein said identical sections have a first end having apertures therein for attachment to said detent features on said hoop actuation and a second end having snap-in shaft member substantially parallel to said center shaft for attachment to said side walls of said lid, wherein during activation of said latch said leg actuation element contact said lid when said hoop handle is pulled upward causing said central shaft to slide upward along said ramped element against the bias of said living spring thereby forcing the pawl member to disengage a frame

19. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim 18, wherein said pawl member comprises a body portion integral at one end with a living spring wherein said living spring terminates with a pawl tail, wherein a second end of said body portion comprises a slam action ramped element.

20. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim 19 20, wherein said pawl body portion has extended side sections each having a sliding surface thereon.

21. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim 20 21, wherein said slot area of said housing comprising a pair of guide attached to said interior surface of said pair of side wall sections for guiding and restraining said sliding surfaces of said extended area of said pawl member body, wherein said slot further comprises a pawl holder for camming said pawl tail.

22. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim 19 20, wherein said housing comprising a protruding flange and a surface flange for attachment to said lid, wherein said back wall comprises a slot for positioning of said pawl tail.

23. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim 22 23, wherein said lid has a flange slot for mating with said protruding flange of said housing, wherein the housing further includes mounting studs for mating with said snap legs of said housing.

24. (Amended) A load floor latch comprising:

a lid housing;

a pawl member positioned within said lid housing for slide operation outwardly from said housing, said pawl member including spring biasing to an outwardly position;

a- an actuation means for retracting said pawl member into said lid housing while lifting said lid housing said actuation means retraction of said pawl member includes providing a force on an outer surface of said pawl member;

b. — a pawl member;

c. — a biasing means for engaging and disengaging said pawl member from a frame; and

d. — a means for attachment to a panel member.

25. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim 25 24, wherein said actuation means comprises a hoop handle entrapped within said biasing means, wherein said pawl member extends therefrom.

26. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim 25 which further comprises a body portion having a first end and a second end, wherein said first end is integral with said means for attachment to a panel.

27. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim 27 26, wherein said means for attachment to a panel is a forward bezel lid hook which is continuous with said living spring.

28. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim 27 26, wherein said second end of said body portion includes a downwardly extending bezel lid snap-in leg, wherein said snap-in leg terminates in a rear bezel lid snap-in hook.

29. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) A load floor latch comprising:

- a. an actuation means;
- b. a pawl member;
- c. a biasing means for engaging and disengaging said pawl member from a frame;
- d. a housing having a pair of side walls, a rear wall, a top portion, a bottom portion, a horizontal flange protruding outward from the bottom portion defining a hole and an outwardly extending flange around said top portion and said side portions of said housing.; and
- f. a lid support device to secure said latch to a frame.

30. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim 30 29, further comprising an ejector having a shafts extending outward for pivotably securing said ejector to said housing.

31. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim ~~31~~ 30, wherein said housing has a central button portion having at least one slot located above an ejector stop, wherein a spring guide is located centrally, wherein a button spring having a first end and a second end wherein said first end is attached to said spring guide, wherein said second member of said button spring contact said central button portion, wherein a pair of ejector holes are located below for attachment of said ejector.

32. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim ~~32~~ 31, wherein said button portion includes a pair of stop tabs dimensioned and configured to mate with said slot on said housing.

33. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim ~~33~~ 32, wherein said actuation means is a button member having a front side, back side, face portion, bottom sides and top sides wherein said button member is attached to said housing by a pair of detent features located on said side portions of said button member wherein said button portion rotates within a pair of holes in said side walls of said housing.

34. (Withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim) The load floor latch of claim ~~34~~ 33, wherein said ejector member comprises an ejector spring guide is biased by a spring attached to said bottom portion.
